



May 16, 2012

The Honorable Jeff Denham (CA-19)
U.S. House of Representatives
1605 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Denham,

On behalf of the Association of the United States Navy (AUSN), we applaud and support your bill H.R. 4155, the Veteran Skills to Jobs Act, which would direct the head of each Federal department and agency to treat relevant military training as sufficient to satisfy training or certification requirements for Federal licenses.

Transitioning from military to civilian life after duty for our servicemen and women is difficult. Furthermore, this transition is made harder with not knowing what job they are qualified for and whether any of their work and training while on active duty can be translated into a professional career in the public or private sector workforce. License certification for certain skill sets is becoming an increasing issue for our military as they come back from Active duty, especially those who come back and seek positions within the Federal government.

According to the Labor Department, there are 3.4 million job openings right now in the United States. Yet, many employers are finding that workers do not have the skills or training they need to qualify for them. Licensure and certification are the two primary types of credentialing. Federally issued occupational licenses cover many areas including the aerospace, communications and maritime sector. The unemployment rate for post 9/11 veterans is 17.3%, and the national veteran's unemployment rate stands at 8.3%. State and local governments, as well as private industry, have undertaken broad efforts to help separating service members find jobs. Seven states have already passed laws to expedite the licensing of transitioning veterans, including Washington, Virginia and Utah. All of these states' laws require state licensing boards to take into account relevant military training when issuing licenses. These states have also determined that the legislation would entail no additional costs.

This legislation would build off of these state examples at the Federal level, by helping separating service members get training and certification recognition within Federal agencies for their roles while on Active duty. The Veteran Skills to Jobs Act also builds upon the successful passage into law last year of Title II of H.R. 674 which contained provisions of S.951/H.R. 1941 The Hiring Heroes Act, which has begun the process of lowering the rate of unemployment amongst our nation's veterans.

Thank you for taking an active role with legislative efforts to ease transition of servicemembers and help combat unemployment amongst veterans. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 703-548-5800.

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Wallis
Legislative Director, AUSN